

P3145

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the
Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
IN THE
ABBY-CHURCH at *Westminster,*
On the 5th of *November,* 1696.

BEING THE
Anniversary Thanksgiving,
For the happy Deliverance from the
Gunpowder Treason.

AND ALSO,
For the happy Arrival of His present MAJESTY
on this Day, for the Deliverance of our CHURCH
and NATION.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
SYMON Lord Bishop of ELY.

L O N D O N:
Printed for Ric. Chiswell, at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's
Church-yard, MDCXCVI.

A
S E R M O N

Preaded before the
Lords Spiritual and Temporal
IN THE
ABBY-CHURCH at Westminster
On the 25th of November, 1686.

BEING THE
Anniversary Thanksgiving

For the happy Deliverance from the
Gunpowder Treason

AND ALSO
For the happy Arrival of His Sacred Majesty
on this Day, for the Deliverance of our CHURCH
and NATION.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
Symon Lord Bishop of Ely.

L O N D O N.
Printed for J. H. at the Rose and Crown in St. Pauls
Church-yard, MDCXCVI.

what an amazing turn the World had lately been in his Affairs. For when he was lifted up to the highest pitch of Power and Glory, and nothing to fear on Earth; he was a moment from Heaven to Dream, of his sudden fall into a condition as low as the Beasts: In which state, till he should be made sensible, That the most high reigns in the King-

dom of the LORDS. Accordingly he relates how all this, not long after the effect of which was, that it took down his Pride (for which so great an abatement was the most proper remedy) and brought him to a lowly state, that God governs the World; and orders all things, that he is to be feared, and his Omnipotence, and his Omnipresence, which can witness

IV. DANIEL 35. *And he doth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?*

THESE Words are part of a Pious Declaration which King Nebuchadnezzar set forth, unto all People, Nations, and Languages, to shew (as he saith in his Preface to it, ver. 2.) the signs and the wonders which the high God had wrought toward him. Which having profoundly admired and adored in the next words, v. 3. *[How great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders]*

ders?]-he proceeds to give the World an account, what an amazing turn ~~the~~ had lately been in his Affairs. For, when he was lifted up to the highest pitch of Princely Power and Glory, and had nothing to fear on Earth; he was admonished from Heaven in a Dream, of his sudden fall into a condition as low as the Beasts: In which ~~he was a~~ ^{he was a} ~~man~~ ^{man}, till he should be made sensible, *That the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* v. 17. Accordingly he relates how all this, not long after, came to pass. The effect of which was, that it took

down his Pride, (for which so great an abasement was the most proper remedy) and brought him to a sober sense, that God governs the World; and orders all things every where by his Over-ruling Providence; with an Absolute Power, which none can withstand or contend.

Which is a Meditation very reasonable at this time, when we are met together to commemorate the Wonderful Providence of God over us in this Church and Kingdom, upon a double account. *First* In Discovering and Defeating one of the deepest and most desperate Conspiracies against us, that ever was hatcht in Hell: *Secondly*, In disappointing the same restless Enemies again; when by their Fraud and our *Faith* they had contrived themselves into such an height of Power, that we had no means left to preserve our Religion and Liberties.

Had we no other Arguments of the Over-ruling Power of Gods Eternal Providence in the World, but these and such as these; they might be sufficient to awaken the sense of it in your minds; and to make us

CON-

conclude, That He that according to his will, in the
 survey of his conduct among the inhabitants of the
 earth, has made himself his lord, and by two things,
 What *days* and the Devils Voice, and the
 Presence, That is, he governs the good by his Will;
 In reading of which Words, I shall only consider
 these Two things: First, The Essence of God's Sovereign Dominion
 and Government; Secondly, The Way and Method whereby he go-
 verns.

I. For the first of these, my Text resolves us; that there is nothing exempt from it; but it reaches to every Creature throughout the whole World: which are comprehended in these Words, *The army of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth.*

By the former of which, the *Army*, or *Host* of Heaven, the Holy Scriptures are wont to express, both those Beings in the Heaven, that are *Invisible*, and those that are *Visible*, *Viz.* the *Angels*; and the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*. Both these are called the *Host* of *Heaven*; and with respect to both God is styled, the *LORD* of *Hosts*.

And First, Let us look with our minds into the Invisible World: The World of Spirits, both good and bad. For, that there are such Beings, hath been the Sense of all Mankind, in all Ages, (as it were easie to shew, if this were a place proper for it) but the Holy Scriptures have given us the clearest and fullest account

account of them; not only informing us, but giving us particular Instances, how God rules and Governs them with an absolute Authority: The good Angels obeying his Voice, and the Devils trembling at his Presence. That is, he governs the good by his Will; and he restrains the evil by his Almighty Power: The good cheerfully perform his Pleasure; and the evil are constrained to do it: Being made to serve the ends of his Wise Providence, where they design to gratifie their own malice.

Out of those Sacred Records therefore, I shall briefly lay before you the devout sense which the most excellent Persons have had of the extent of God's Providence; without entring into the other evident proofs we have of this Doctrine.

Read then, and consider those words of the Royal Psalmist, (CIII. 10.) and they will inform you how God governs the Holy Angels. Bless the LORD, ye Angels that excel in strength, that do his Commandments, hearkening to the voice of his words. Bless the LORD all ye his Hosts; ye Ministers of his that do his pleasure. The like you read in the very next Psalm CIV. 4. He maketh his Angels Spirits; his Ministers a flaming fire. For, so did the Angels sometimes appear; in a glittering and shining manner, like a flame of fire.

And hence it is, that they are stiled *The Chariots of God*; because they are an Host or Army to execute his Will and Pleasure, Psal. LXXVIII. 17. *The Chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels: the LORD is among them, arim Sinai, &c.* And hence also they are said, more particularly to be *Ministring*.

Ministring Spirits set forth to Minister, for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation, 1 Hebr. ult. That is, they Minister to the Will of God, for the preservation and safety of good Christians: unto whom God designs a happiness beyond this World, in his heavenly Kingdom; and therefore will not let them want his care of them, while they continue here.

And in like manner the same Sovereignty of God is represented in Holy Scripture, as Governing the Devils also: whom he awes and restrains by his Power. For, when he cast them out of Heaven, for their Rebellion against him, *he delivered them into Chains of Darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment, 2 Pet. II. 4.* This Judgment they expect, and tremble at the Thoughts of it; because they know they cannot avoid it: and thence are said, *to believe and tremble, 2 Jam. 19.* And they expect it in *Chains*; feel, that is, the Power of God upon them, tying them up and restraining them; so that they cannot do what, nor go whither they please: but are like great Malefactors, who till they are brought before the Judge, are bound in Chains, and cannot stir; but whether their Keeper thinks fit to suffer them.

Thus we find they were perfectly subject to our Blessed Saviour; and by him, to those whom he sent to Preach the Gospel: who at their return came and told him, *Lord, even the Devils are subject to us, through thy Name, 10 Luke 17.* They fled when they did but hear of him; they quitted their Possession when his Power approached: they were not able to stand before his Authority. Which is sufficient to shew how God Rules the Invisible World, in every part of it: over all the Hosts of Angels and Legions of Devils, who cannot resist his Word.

B

And

And now if we lift up our Eyes unto the Visible Heaven, we behold there another *Army*, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, running the Course that God hath appointed them; and we read also of their standing still at his Commandment. For, *he bringeth the Sun as a Bridegroom out of his Chamber, (saith the Psalmist) and it rejoiceth as a strong young Man to run a Race, XIX. 5.* But if he pleases, he can stop its Course, and hinder its Motion; as he did in the Days of *Joshua*, when he said, *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the Vally of Ajalon. And the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed, until the People had avenged themselves upon their Enemies, X. Josh. 12, 13.* The Stars also are said to have fought in their Courses against *Sisara*, V. *Judg. 20,* by powring out, perhaps, some violent Storm upon him: which discomfited his numerous Army, and broke their Ranks, and put them into such Disorder, that it was apparent Heaven fought against them.

And accordingly the *Thunder*, which is said also to come out of Heaven, is called the *Voice of God, (XXIX. Psal. 5, 7, 8.)* who is said also in the first Lesson appointed for this Day (2 *Sam. XXII. 14. 15.*) to shoot out *Lightning*, like Arrows; whereby *David's Enemies* were scattered. The *Clouds of Heaven*, likewise he is said in other places, to make his *Chariot, (CIV. Psal. 3.)* and to walk upon the *Wings of the Wind*: because he hath often employed those in terrible Blasts, and furious Tempests, of Rain, and Hail, and stormy Winds; which as the Psalmist elsewhere says, fulfil his Pleasure.

II. And now if we bring our Thoughts down from the upper Regions of the World, unto these lower,

wherein we live, we have the same devout Acknowledgments of all good Men, that he hath an absolute Dominion there; and doth according to his Will among the Inhabitants of the Earth, as well as in the Army of Heaven. For the Earth it self is said to tremble and shake before him, (2 Sam. XXII. 8. CIV. Psal. 37.) as it did at the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai, and at other times. He Ruleth also the Raging of the Sea: when the Waves thereof arise, he stilleth them, LXXXIX. Psal. 9. Nor is his Dominion limited to inanimate Creatures, but extends also to every living thing, to whom he opens his Hand, and satisfies their Desire, CXLV. Psal. 16. But the principal Inhabitants of the Earth are Mankind; to whom he hath given Dominion over all other Creatures, (I. Gen. 28.) and Rules over Men, as Men Rule over other things. For, he turneth Man to Destruction, and sayeth, Return ye Children of Men, XC. Psal. 3. He lifts up, and casts down according to his Pleasure. He sets up one and puts down another: for, he is the Judge; whose Sentence none can reverse.

Nor doth he Rule over Mens outward Concernments only; but sways their Minds, and moves and influences their Hearts. For the preparation of the Heart of Man, and the answer of the Tongue is from the LORD, XVI. Prov. 1.

Which is true, not only of mean Persons; Men of low Degree, of easie and flexible Minds: but of the highest and mightiest Orders; of the stoutest and most undaunted Spirits; of Kings and Princes, of their great Captains and Commanders, their wise Counsellors, and deep Statesmen, whom he frequently infatuates, and brings their Counsels to naught,

when they cross his Will. For, with him is both *Strength and Wisdom*, (as Job admirably speaks) *he leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools. He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. He removeth away the Speech of the Trusty, and taketh away the Understanding of the Aged. He poureth Contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the Strength of the Mighty*, XII. Job. 16, &c. This was the Sense of that Holy Man in the most ancient Times; and Posterity made the same Observations. For, *many Kings* (saith the Son of Sirach) *have set down upon the Ground; and one that was never thought of hath worn the Crown. Many mighty Men have been greatly disgraced: and the Honourable delivered into other mens Hands*, XI. Eccclus. 5. 6.

Nor, Lastly, doth he Govern single Persons only; but Kingdoms also, and the greatest Societies of Men. From whence he is called *the God of all the Kingdoms of the Earth*, 2 Kings XIX. 15. and said to *Rule over all the Kingdoms of the Heathen*, (as well as over his People *Israel*) with such a Power and Might, *as none is able to withstand*, 2 Chron. XX. 6.

Thus I have as briefly as I could, represented the Extent of Gods Dominion and Providence; which Rules over the whole World, Visible and Invisible: reaching to all things in Heaven, and to all in Earth; to all and every Creature, and to all the Concerns of every one of them.

II.

I proceed now to the *Second* thing I undertook, which is to show the Way and Method of this Divine Govern-

Government : whereby it will appear, that all this that I have Reported from the Holy Scripture, is evidently true ; and cannot be denied by those who believe God to be the Creator of Heaven and of Earth.

And here I shall consider only these *Four* things,
First, That God sees and knows all things throughout the World.

Secondly, That nothing can come to pass, but what he either effects or permits.

Thirdly, He effects and permits nothing, but for wise and worthy Ends. And

Fourthly, He certainly accomplishes these Ends, and that by such Means as he pleases.

I. *First*, I say, God sees and knows all Things; all Persons, and whatsoever appertains unto them ; and that in all possible Measures, in Measures Infinite and Incomprehensible by us : but which we are sure to be true, because he made and formed all Things; and therefore must be privy to every Motion which it is possible for them to have, and is present to every the smallest Inclination they make to any Motion. He knows their Nature ; he understands the Vertue of every Cause ; he perfectly comprehends what it can do, and how far it can go ; he discerns its Intentions, and what it designs : Nothing can be concealed from him, but every thing lies naked, bare, and open before him. For, *the Eyes of the LORD*, saith his Prophet, *run to and fro throughout the whole Earth*, 2 Chron. XVI. 9. that is, his Knowledge comprehends all things, every-where.

And as for Man, *his Ways are before the Eyes of the LORD*, and he pondereth all his goings, (V. Prov. 21.)

for,

for *his Eyes are in every Place, beholding the Evil and the Good*, XV. Prov. 3.

Nor are his outward Actions only exposed to him ; but all the Thoughts and Designs of his Heart : For, *Hell and Destruction are before the LORD : how much more then the Hearts of the Children of Men ?* XV. Prov.

II. The most secret Imaginations of their Minds, the deepest Desires of their Souls, all the Windings and Turnings of their Spirits, in their most retired Consultations ; even those Motions which are not observed by themselves, are all known to God. Whence those Expressions in the Prophet *Jeremiah XVII. 10. I the LORD search the Heart, and try the Reins, even to give to every Man according to his Ways, and according to the fruit of his Doings.* And in the Prophet *Ezekiel, XI. 5. Thus saith the LORD, thus have ye said, O House of Israel : for, I know the things that come into your Mind, every one of them.* Which declare, that God doth not only see and know what is subject to outward View ; but the very Thoughts of mens Hearts also : yea, and every one of those Thoughts, and the Entrance or Beginning of them.

II. But further, as he infallibly knows all things, so nothing comes to pass, but what he either effects or permits : and permits, not because he cannot, but because he is not pleased to hinder it ; for, he Acts every-where *according to his Will.* There is a Providence in all things under his Government ; but there is a Difference in the Exercise of it. That which is good and worthy of God in the Mind, and Counsels, and Actings of Men, that may and ought to be ascribed to God, and to his Grace ; as guiding, aiding, and assisting

sisting therein. But that which is wicked in them, must not be thus ascribed to him; as if he moved or excited them to it, (for he cannot will any thing that is Evil) but only that he did permit it, when he could have hindred it: for the Accomplishment of such Ends, as those wicked Agents did not think of. In both these are the clear Lines of Providence; though in different Characters.

For, how often do we Read of God's Working, what he pleases throughout the World? particularly CXXXV. *Psal. 5. 6. I know that the LORD is great, and that our LORD is above all Gods. Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in Heaven, and in Earth, in the Sea, and all deep Places.* Where as he effects what he thinks good; so nothing can be effected by any Agent, unless he think good to permit it. For, he awes the Thoughts, and restrains the Passions, and binds the Hands, and fetters the goings of Men; so that they cannot move a step, but as he suffers them. Whence that of *Jacob to his Wives, your Father hath deceived me, and changed my Wast ten times: but God suffered him not to hurt me, XXXI. Gen. 7.* That is, let him proceed no further in his Projects than to show his ill Intentions towards me. And thus *David* speaking of the Patriarchs, and of God's respect towards them, and care of them, saith, *he suffered no Man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd Kings for their sake, saying; Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm, CV. Psal. 14. 15.* The greatest Resolution can proceed no further, the strongest Power can effect no more than the supreme Governor of all will allow.

III. And

III. And as nothing comes to pass, but what he either effects or permits, so he effects and permits nothing but for Wise and Holy Ends. He that is infinitely Wise, cannot but Exercise that Wisdom in all that falls under its View; for, did he not so, he were not infinitely Wise. And for the same Reason, he that is infinitely Holy, cannot but design most Holy Ends in all the Contrivances of his Wisdom. From whence it is, that the Holy Books ascribe the Event of Things not merely to his *Will*, but to the *Counsel of his Will*. For, *with him is Wisdom and Strength*, as *Job* admirably speaks in the Chapter before-named, (XII. 13, 14.) *he hath Counsel and Understanding. Behold, he breaks down, and it cannot be built up again; he shuts up a Man, and there can be no opening.* Which he manifests to be true sometimes, in such surprising Ways, that the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, *he is wonderful in Wisdom, and excellent in Working*, XXVIII. 29. And *Jeremiah*, that *he is great in Counsel, and mighty in Work*, XXXII. 19. and as *St. Paul* Sums up this Matter, *worketh all things after the Counsel of his own Will*, I. Ephes. 11.

Nor doth his Wisdom manifest it self in his *Doings* only, but in his *Permissions* too: in what he suffers to be done, even contrary to his own Commands. The Sinner intends one thing in the Sin he commits; and God intends another, in permitting it. The Sinner to gratifie his own Lusts, his Pride, his Rage, Ambition, Covetousness, or Revenge: But God to magnifie his Justice, his Power and Wisdom; whereby he punishes, corrects, amends, improves, and perfects Men; according as they are severally Qualified for his Favour or Displeasure.

Thus

Thus what *Joseph's Brethren* did to satisfy their Envy, God suffered for most excellent Purposes : to save their whole Family, in a sore and General Famine ; and to accomplish what he said to *Abraham*, that his Seed should long sojourn in *Aegypt* : And thus the Invasion of the King of *Affyria* was permitted by God, as a Chastisement of the Jews for their many and great Sins : but intended by him, to fill his Coffers by Spoil and Rapine. O *Affyrian*, saith the LORD by the Prophet, *the Rod of my Anger, and the Staff in your Hand is my Indignation*, X. Isa. 5. Did he then intend to serve God in this Expedition, and execute his Anger ? No such thing : For, thus it follows, *v. 7. Howbeit, he meaneth not so ; neither doth his Heart think so ; but it is in his Heart to destroy, and to cut off Nations not a few.* That is, to make all the Ravage he is able.

Thus you see that whatsoever Men design and intend, God always designs some Just, Wise, and Holy End ; in all that he effects or permits in the World.

IV. And as he designs these Ends, so they certainly come to pass ; in despite of all Opposition, that contrary Powers can make against them : For, none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, *what dost thou ?* And as none can withstand his Power, so none can avoid his Counsels, or control his Purposes : For, *there is no Wisdom, nor Understanding, nor Counsel against the LORD*, XXI. Prov. 30. But the Counsel of the LORD, saith *David*, standeth for ever ; and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations, XXXIII. Psal. 11. And thus it standeth against all Opposition and Contrivances of Men : For, *there are many Devices in Man's Heart ; but the*

the Counsel of the LORD that shall stand, XIX. Prov. 21. And all the Skill wherewith any understanding Creature is or can be endued, all the Devices and Projects of Mens Hearts, are as subject unto his incomprehensible Wisdom, and the Counsel of his Will, as the Life, Being, and Motion of Natural Things. Which Subjection doth no way deprive them of all Liberty and Freedom, in consulting, devising, and projecting: but only of Power to appoint such Success as they please, to their own Projects and Devices. And the more ample we allow the Sphere of any Creatures Liberty to be, in devising and projecting, the more Admirable doth the Counsel of the most High appear, in directing and ordering its free Courses, to such Ends as he appoints.

Now these Ends God accomplishes sometimes by common and ordinary Means: sometimes by Means wholly *Miraculous*: and sometimes by such as, not wholly *Miraculous*, but have something *Extraordinary* in them.

First, Sometimes by common and ordinary Means: as when the diligent Hand getteth Riches; and Slothfulness and Negligence brings Men to Poverty. When the Proud and Ambitious fall into a Snare, which intangles them in Destruction; and the Meek, the Humble, and Patient, inherit the Earth. These Means commonly produce such Ends; yet not without Success from God: who sometimes is pleased to hinder their Production; for Reasons best known to himself. So the Son of Sirach hath observed, *XI. Ecclus. 14. Prosperity and Adversity; Life and Death; Poverty and Riches, come of the Lord.* The last of which he thus Explains in the foregoing Verses, *11. 12. There*

is one that laboureth and taketh pains, and maketh haste; and is so much the more behind. Again, there is another that is slow and hath need of help, wanting Ability, and full of Poverty; yet the Eye of the Lord looketh upon him for good, and setteth him up from his low estate. In these common things (particularly in Ploughing, Sowing, and Harvest, &c.) we do not attribute to God so much as we ought to do: and one reason of it is, that we either are not conversant in the Holy Scriptures, or do not mind them when we read them. And the often repetition of the Words of Life, (as an excellent Man of our own long ago observed) without due Reverence and Attention to them, breeds an insensibility or deadness in mens Souls.

II. Which is so true, that though God sometimes produces the Ends he designs (as I observed in the second place) by such Means as are wholly miraculous; yet Mens Souls continue benumbed and stupified, unless they seriously consider, and lay them to Heart. For thus he often Ruled among the Stubborn Jews: whom he seems to have Chosen, to be a Theatre of his Providence; in them to give a Demonstration unto all the Nations of the World, and to all following Generations, of his Power Ruling every-where. Thus he delivered them out of the Hand of Pharaoh, by an out-stretched Arm (as Moses speaks). Thus he passed them through the Red Sea; thus he fed and maintained them in the Wilderness; and at last brought them into Canaan, by a continued Succession of Wonders wrought by his mighty Power among them; that all the Ends of the Earth might fear him.

III. But sometimes he Works his Ends by a middle sort of Means or Causes; such as are not perfectly Miraculous, but yet have something extraordinary in them.

When second Causes are not proportionable to their Effects; when they produce things unexpected, and which seem altogether improbable; when lesser things prevail over greater, weaker overthrow the Strength of those that seemed in all humane Judgment to be far Mightier: here is something that is very Extraordinary, something that is Remarkable, a marvellous Hand of God; though nothing, perhaps, perfectly Miraculous. Read the Story of *Esther* and *Mordecai*, and observe how they prevailed against the potent Interest, and dreadful Project of *Haman*, (in which the whole Empire was engaged) and you will find such a Concurrence of strange things, as will convince you, there was a wonderful Hand of God in it. Every one of those Occurrences apart, may seem usual and ordinary: as that King *Ahasuerus* could not sleep; and that he called for a Book to divert him, rather than Instruments of Musick; and that they brought the Chronicles of the Kingdom, rather than any other Book; and that they read there, where *Mordecai's* good Deeds were Recorded, but had been forgotten by him; and that *Haman* should just then come into the Court, when the King inquired what had been done for *Mordecai*; and should himself unwittingly contrive the greatest Honour to be put upon him; and appointed to be the Instrument of it: These, and all the rest, considered severally and singly, alone by themselves, cannot be called

called Extraordinary : but take them all together, in their intire Frame and Composure, it is such as cannot be ascribed to any but his Workmanship, who Created all things, by an astonishing Artifice.

Thus are things that seem unlikely brought to pass by the secret Counsel of God, against the most powerful Interest, Contrivances, and Combinations that can be raised upon Earth.

And of this sort were those two great Providences of God, for which we bless him this Day ; and are met here together to celebrate the Remembrance of them publickly, with our thankful Acknowledgments.

First, The happy Deliverance of King JAMES the First, and the Three Estates of this Realm, from the most Traiterous, and Bloody intended Massacre by Gunpowder.

Secondly, The happy Arrival of his present Majesty on this Day, for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation.

The former of these was a Deliverance so wonderful, if it be considered in all its Circumstances, that it can hardly be parallel'd in any humane Story. I will mention but these Two things,

First, The Inevitableness of our Danger, according to Humane Reason.

Secondly, The Marvellous Manner of its Discovery and Prevention.

I. In

1. In the former of these, there are two Circumstances, which show the intended Destruction was Inevitable, if God by an extraordinary Providence had not interposed to prevent it.

They are the Secrecy of its Contrivance; and the Persons by whom it was Contrived and Managed.

1. As to the Secrecy of the Contrivance, it was so great, that the Conspirators themselves boasted of it, in the Letter which discovered all: wherein were these Words; *They shall receive a terrible Blow this Parliament; and yet they shall not see who Hurt them.* For, so secret was the Design, that though it had been long Working; yet it lay Concealed, without the least Inking of it, till within XII Hours of its intended Execution. It was a Work of Darkness, framed under Ground; where no Eye (but God's) could see them. They buried their Counsel in the Depth of the Earth; and bound themselves likewise by the most Sacred Ties, never to disclose, Directly or Indirectly, by Word or Circumstance, the Matter propounded to them to keep Secret: Nor desist from the Execution thereof; unless the rest should give Leave.

Thus every Man Swore that entered into this Conspiracy, by the Blessed Trinity, and by the Sacrament; which then they received.

2. After this it was not likely they should either Disclose it, or Desist from it; if we consider Secondly, The Persons engaged in it: who were Men of desperate Resolution, as well as of desperate Principles.

ciples. They were all Inspired with a false Religious Zeal; spurred on by a Fancy, that they were about an Action Meritorious; whereby they should highly serve God, and his Catholick Church. Which so hardened their Hearts, that he who was first apprehended, was not so much as abashed, nor expressed the least sign of Trouble; but only for this, that he had not done the Execution. When the rest also came to Suffer for this Treason, they did not repent of it; nor beg Pardon: unless upon this Condition, that the Pope and the Church should declare it a Sin. Which I do not find they have done to this Day.

Now how could Men of such Principles and Resolution, relent or think of going back; when they certainly believed they were set on Work by God, and were warranted by his Will; and infallibly guided by his chief Minister, to bring the greatest Glory to God, and to advance his Religion? These and the like Advantages, made the Discovery of this Conspiracy so unlikely; that they were fully assured in their own Minds of the Success.

II. And yet, now behold, how this Work of Darknels was brought to Light, even by themselves; for, it could no other ways be Discovered. And that it should be discovered by them, is little short of a Miracle. For you have heard how they were Bound by a solemn Oath, not to give the least Intimation of it, *Directly, or Indirectly, by Word, or by Circumstance.* And yet so it was, that one of them who was willing to work such a Publick Mischief, had a desire to secure a private Friend from the Danger. And this against his own Intention; against his

his Resolution ; against his Oath, as well as against his Interest : Nay, and against the Judgment of their Oracle (*F. Garnet*, the Jesuite) who had settled this Point in a deliberate Answer to this Question proposed to him ; Whether the Innocent (that is, those of their Religion) might be Destroyed with the Guilty, (that is, with those of ours) when the Good that would come thereby would abundantly compensate their Loss ? Unto which he gave this Resolution, That they might : Nay, That it would be a thing of great Merit, if thereby some great Benefit would be procured to the Catholiques. Notwithstanding all which contrary Obligations, one of them opened a little Crevice, whereby there was a way made to look into this Work of Hellish Darkness.

This most certainly was the extraordinary Hand of God ; and ought to be so acknowledged by us. It was not extraordinary indeed, that one of them should Admonish an honourable Friend of a Danger ; unless it were in this, that there should be so much good Nature left in the Breast of a Man, who had consented to the Ruine of his Country. But without question, this was Extraordinary, that a Man under such sacred Ties of the strictest Secrecy, should give the smallest Notice of a Danger ; and that he should express his Mind in such Terms as gave Apprehensions of some unusual hidden and unseen Danger ; and (*Lastly,*) That the mind of the King should be awaked to apprehend a Danger by some Blast of Gunpowder.

These

These things ought to be ascribed to that most watchful Providence of God, whereof I have been discoursing: which sometimes in an extraordinary manner *disappoints the Devices of the Crafty; so that their Hands cannot perform their Enterprize.* To this alone, the King and the whole Kingdom, ascribe it in that Act of Parliament, which is appointed to be read in all Parish-Churches this Day: wherein they acknowledge, God was pleased *by inspiring the King's most Excellent Majesty, with a Divine Spirit, to interpret some dark Phrases of a Letter, above and beyond all ordinary Construction, miraculously to discover this hidden Treason, not many Hours before the appointed time for the Execution.*

They call it *Miraculous* in a large Sense; because it was Extraordinary, Wonderful, and Amazing, as miraculous Events are.

And therefore those Protestants who would intitle a great Statesman to the Discovery, have justly been thought to have a Spice of Atheism in their Breasts; as a great Man observed, who lived in those Days. They would have nothing (saith he) imputed to God; whose Hand was so visible in this Discovery, that it could not be denied, but by ascribing it to an Oracle of Intelligence in those times: who they say (without any other Authority for it, but their own) knew of this Conspiracy long before, and let it go on; because he could catch them, when he pleased.

But as this is for private Men to give the lye to the whole Kingdom, King and all; so it is to rob God of the Glory of his marvellous Works: and therein to be worse than Heathens, who ascribed such strange Events to some unknown God, or to the

D

God-

Goddeſs Fortune ; rather than think, there was nothing but humane Contrivance in them. Far be it for any of us to entertain ſuch a Thought ; which can ſpring from nothing but an unwillingneſs to believe that Doctrin of Providence, which *Nebuchadnezzar* himſelf here Proclaims to all the World ; when he ſaith, *He doth according to his Will in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, &c.*

Nor is the Providence of God leſs apparent, in that other great Mercy, for which this Day is become Memorable, as might be ſhown in all the foregoing Particulars. But let it ſuffice to remember you in general, that when the Deſign of Deſtroying our Religion and Liberties, had been laid with great Secrecy, and carried on with ſuch Subtilty for many Years, that our Foot was in the Snare, before we perceived that it was laid for us ; when the Nation had been ſo deluded by fair Promiſes, and by their own Credulity, that the Danger wherein we were, did not appear, till we knew not how to avoid it ; When our Romiſh Adverſaries had gotten ſuch an abſolute Power over us, that it imboldned them to break through all Reſtraints of Law, and every other Obligation : Then, when we were in theſe Straits, God was pleaſed to raiſe up the Spirit of our preſent Sovereign, to enterprize our Deliverance ; and with the hazard of his own Perſon, to endeavour our Preſervation.

And as nothing could Diſcourage him in this Undertaking (but though he was driven back by a Tempeſt at his firſt ſetting out, he calmly perſued his Reſolution,

solation, trusting in that Almighty Providence, unto which he had committed himself), So he found all things in the Issue succeed much beyond all Expectation. God turned the Hearts of the whole Realm to favour his Design so far, as to wish Prosperity to him in his Voyage hither. And he turned the Winds also to be so favourable; that if they had been absolutely at his own Disposal, he could not have commanded them to be more obsequious to him, than he found them. For, when he was brought to our Coast by a strong Gale, in a very speedy Course; and had over-shot his Port; the Wind changed immediately, and brought him back to his desired Haven. These are but a few of those wonderful things, that concurred to his safe Landing here, on this Day eight Year, without any Opposition: And made him appear like an Hand out of a Cloud to rescue us from our eminent Danger; being so befriended from above, that with an Handful of Men in comparison, he struck such a Terror into his Enemies, that they melted before him, as the Wax before the Fire; and were scattered as the Dust before the Wind. He was Received everywhere with the joyful Acclamations of the People: and in a short time placed peaceably upon the Throne of these Kingdoms.

Thus God dash't in a Moment, the Projects that had been forming, no body knows how many Years. Their long-laid Designs miscarried on a sudden; when they thought nothing could hinder the Execution. A Deliverer was sent unexpectedly to us, when we were ready to perish; and without any con-

D 2 or behaviour contrivance

trivance of ours, we saw all the Contrivances of those that hated us, utterly broken in pieces.

This we must acknowledge, was brought about by the singular Providence of God; who, when we were left in very great Confusion, wrought things beyond our Hopes, into the happy Settlement we now enjoy. We cannot ascribe such a wonderful Revolution of Affairs, to mere humane Force, which was very small: But to the omnipotent Hand of God, whose *Kingdom*, saith the Psalmist, *Ruleth over all*: And who *scattereth the Proud* (as the Blessed Virgin speaks in her Song) *in the Imaginations of their Heart*; *putting down the Mighty from their Seats, and exalting them of low Degree*, &c. Luke 51. 52.

Of which Doctrine great Use may, and ought to be made; both by them whom God hath thus wonderfully defeated; and by our selves, whom he hath preserved from their wicked Contrivances.

To the former, another Holy Woman hath given most excellent Counsel, in her Song, I. Sam. 11. 3. *Talk no more so exceeding proudly, let not Arrogancy come out of your Mouth: for, the LORD is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed. The Bows of the mighty Men are broken; and they that stumbled, are girt with strength.*

But we our selves are most concerned to make a right use of what hath been said; and therefore, I say no more to others, but apply my self to those who enjoy the Benefit of these great Deliverances which God hath vouchsafed to us.

And

I.

And *First*, we should all learn to live in a constant Sense of God, and of his over-ruling Providence; and accordingly in all our Affairs, whether Publick or Private, to have a regard to him, to acknowledge him, and to put our whole Trust in him: considering that he Governs the World, and Governs it according to his wise Will and Pleasure. His Eyes behold all the Concernments of the Sons of Men: Nothing comes to pass, but what he effects or permits among them: He effects and permits nothing, but out of Wise, Holy, and Excellent Ends; and whatsoever Ends he absolutely purposes, those he will certainly accomplish: And therefore in all our ways, we ought, as I said, to have a Respect unto him; and commit our selves and Undertakings unto the Direction of his good Providence: And above all things take care, that we be found in such Courses as he approves, and we may rationally hope he will Favour and Bless. For, there is not a greater Comfort in the World, than this Doctrine, if we render our selves capable of the Favour of his good Providence. Which is, by endeavouring that our Ways may be so pleasing to God, that we may humbly expect he will succeed and prosper them; unless he intend some greater Good to us, by the Disappointment.

II.

That's the next Use we ought to make of this Doctrine; to take the strictest care, that we never so much

much as design, much less undertake any thing, but what we know is agreeable to God's most Holy Will, and upon which we may look for his Blessing.

For, though he may permit Sinners to do Evil, and for the present to work their own Ends by it; yet, as this is no excuse to those Sinners, so it will prove no advantage to them in the Issue: Nay, he often dashes all their Hopes, and spoils all their Projects in a Moment, when they little expect it. But if we *Delight our selves in the LORD, and do good*, (as the Psalmist speaks, XXXVII. 3. 4.) *he will give us the Desires of our Heart*: or make even Disappointments to prove advantageous to us, by that good Providence, which knows how to Work all things for the good of those that love him. And on the other side, whatsoever Mischief wicked Men devise against us, he will either wholly put it by, or let it proceed so far only, as to make his Wisdom appear in their Defeat; or let it succeed to produce the greatest Good to those that fear him.

We must live therefore in the Fear and Love of God; in dutiful Obedience to our Sovereign, and to the Laws; and be just, and charitable, and kind one to another. For, in these, and such like things, we are sure we fulfil the Will of God; and therefore may promise our selves to be favoured by his Almighty Providence.

III.

Unto whom we are bound to be very thankful, for the prosperous Issues and Events of all good Designs in the World, whether of our own or other Men's.

Men ; and for the defeating of all wicked Contrivances : and more particularly those wherein the publick Safety and Tranquility is concerned ; especially such singular Providences of God, as we this day Commemorate.

If God demonstrate his Providence in any thing here in this World, (and I have proved he shows it in all things) he exercises it in the Governing, Defending, and Protecting of publick Persons and Societies. And never was there a more visible Appearance of the Divine Providence over a Kingdom ; than in the Discovery and Prevention of the Gunpowder-Treason ; and in the late Defeat which he unexpectedly gave to the same Conspirators against our Religion and Liberties. Concerning both which Deliverances, we may say, as the Psalmist doth in another case : *They imagined a mischievous Device, which they were not able to perform. They travelled with Iniquity, they conceived Mischief, and brought forth Falshood. They made a Pit, and digged it, and are fallen into the Pit which they made.* For, the Event of the Gunpowder Conspiracy, by the merciful Providence of the Almighty, proved the discloser of it to be a false Prophet, and to have spoken Presumptuously ; when he said in his Letter ; *That God and Man had concurred to Punish the Iniquity of those Times ;* by that Blow which they intended. The Blow, blessed be God, fell upon themselves ; and they suffered the just Punishment of their own Iniquities. In the Snare which they laid, was their own Foot taken ; and they fell by their own Wickedness : but we escaped as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler : the Snare was broken, and we were delivered.

So.

So that I may say as King *JAMES* did upon this Occasion, *Whereas they thought to Extirpate us and our Memory; their infamous Memory shall by this means remain, to the End of the World. Upon the one part, and upon the other, God's great and merciful Deliverance of his Anointed, and of us all, shall remain in never-dying Records: And the same God grant, that it may be Engraven in Marble Tables of Thankfulness in our Hearts.*

IV.

But we must not express our Gratitude meerly in rendering Praise and Thanksgiving unto the Author of our Deliverances; but in the faithful Improvement of them also to his Glory: by the sincere Love and Practice of that Holy Religion, which hath been so often, in such a marvellous manner preserved, and still is continued to us.

A Religion which teaches us to Worship God most purely; and to believe all things that he hath revealed unto us; to Honour and Obey the King also, most conscientiously, next to God: for, it acknowledges no Superiour to him, in these his Realms and Dominions; nor will let us believe, that any body can dispense with the Duty we owe him. A Religion which abhors private Conspiracies and Rebellion, as much as it doth Heresies and Schisms. Which leads us in the way of the truly Catholick Church of Christ; which doth not allow us to do any Evil, for the obtaining the greatest Good. In short, a Religion which is wholly Built upon the undoubted Word of God,

God, and not upon the uncertain Traditions of Men.

Unto this therefore let us adhear with a stedfast Affection, and unshaken Fidelity. Let us preserve this most carefully, which hath been wonderfully preserved by God. And there is no way to preserve it like a sincere Practice of that Piety which it teacheth us: In which let us endeavour to grow more and more; and be quickned to it by these *Two* Motives.

First, That the Work of Reformation it self, was at first Effected by an extraordinary Providence of God; through mean and weak Instruments: when many greater Persons, who wisht for a Reformation, thought it impossible to be brought about.

Secondly, That it hath been here among us, in as extraordinary a manner preserved; by the same Almighty Providence, whereby it was wrought. So our Fore-fathers have testified unto us, who saw this day which God himself made Memorable, by the marvellous Deliverance which he vouchsafed to them. And so we our selves are able to testifie, who have again seen his Salvation upon this very day; which he hath made anew, to be a day of Praise to him, and Blessing to us.

Let us be afraid of Provoking so gracious and bountiful a Benefactor, by obstinate Disobedience to his Holy Laws: which he hath bound upon us

E

by

by such endearing Obligations. Let us cheerfully do his Will; who hath done for us according to our Hearts desire. This was the End for which God vouchsafed such wonderful Deliverances unto Israel, as are Recorded in the CV. Psalm, *That they might observe his Statutes, and keep his Laws.* So that Psalm concludes, and the very same, no doubt, God expects from us: who ought to charge ourselves with these Two things.

First, To preserve the Memory of what God hath done for us: *For, he hath so done his marvellous Works, that they might be had in remembrance,* as the Psalmist speaks, CXI. Psal. 4.

And *Secondly*, To consider, that then we remember them as we ought, when we remember his Commandments to do them. Then we may have a good hope, that the LORD who hath been mindful of us, will still bless us, he will bless the House of Israel, he will bless the House of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great, CXV. Psal. 12. 13. For, the Mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them them that fear him; and his Righteousness unto Childrens Children. To such as keep his Covenant, and to those that remember his Commandments to do them, CHL. 17, 18.

Which

*Which the God of all Grace give us
Hearts, sincerely to Resolve and
Study, for the sake of Christ Je-
sus: To whom, with the Father,
and the Holy Ghost, be Glory and
Majesty, Dominion and Power,
both now and ever.*

Amen.

F I N I S.

*Books Written by SYMON PATRICK, D. D. now Lord
Bishop of ELY; and Printed for Richard Chiswell.*

- T**HE Parable of the Pilgrim, written to a Friend. The 6 Edition. 4to. 1681.
 — *Mensa Mystica*: Or, a Discourse concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: In which the Ends of its Institution are so manifested, our Addressees to it so directed, our Behaviour there and afterward so composed, that we may not lose the Profits which are to be received by it. With Prayers and Thanksgivings inserted. To which is annexed
 — *Aqua Genitalis*: A Discourse concerning Baptism: In which is inserted a Discourse to persuade to a confirmation of the Baptismal Vow. 8vo.
 — *Jewish Hypocrisie*: A Caveat to the present Generation. Wherein is shewn both the false and the true way to a Nations or Persons compleat Happiness; from the sickness and recovery of the Jewish State. To which is added, a discourse-upon *Micah*, 6. 8. belonging to the same matter. 8vo.
 — *Divine Arithmatick*: A Sermon at the Funeral of Mr. *Samuel Jacob*, Minister of *St. Mary Woolnoth-Church* in *Lombard-street*, *London*. With an Account of his Life. 8vo.
 — A Sermon preached at the Funeral of Mr. *Tho. Grigg*, Rector of *St. Andrew-Under-shaft*, *London*. 4to.
 — An Exposition of the Ten Commandments. 8vo.
 — Heart's Ease: Or, a Remedy against all Troubles. With a Consolatory Discourse, particularly directed to those who have lost their Friends and Relations. To which is added Two Papers, printed in the time of the late Plague. The sixth Edition corrected. 12mo. 1695.
 — The Pillar and Ground of Truth. A Treatise shewing that the Roman Church falsely claims to be *That Church*, and the Pillar of *That Truth* mentioned by *St. Paul*, in *1 Tim.* 3. 15. 4to.
 — An Examination of *Bellarmin's* Second Note of the Church, viz. *A N- TIQVITY*. 4to.
 — An Examination of the Texts which Papists cite out of the Bible to prove the Supremacy of *St. Peter* and of the Pope over the whole Church. In Two Parts. 4to.
 — A private Prayer to be used in difficult times.
 — A Thanksgiving for our late wonderful Deliverance.
 — A Prayer for Charity, Peace and Unity; chiefly to be used in *Lent*.
 — A Sermon preached upon *St. Peter's* Day; printed with Enlargements. 4to.
 — A Sermon preached in *St. James's* Chappel, before the Prince of *Orange*, *Jan.* 20. 1688. on *Isaiah* 11. 6.
 — A Second Part of the Sermon before the Prince of *Orange*, on the same Text. Preached in *Covent-Garden*.
 — A Sermon preached before the Queen in *March* 1688, on *Colos.* 3. 15.
 — A Sermon against Murmuring, preached at *Covent-Garden* in *Lent*, 16 on *1 Cor.* 10. 10.
 — A Sermon against Censuring; preached at *Covent-Garden* in *Advent*; 1688. on *1 Cor.* 4. 10.
 — Fast-Sermon before the King and Queen, *Apr.* 16. 1690. on *Prov.* 14. 34.
 — A Thanksgiving-Sermon before the Lords, *Nov.* 26. 1691. for reducing of *Ireland*, and the King's safe Return. On *Deut.* 4. 9.
 — A Fast-Sermon before the Queen, *Apr.* 8. 1692. On *Numb.* 10. 9.
 — Sermon before the Lord Mayor at *St. Brides* Church, on *Easter-Munday*, 1696. on *2 Tim.* 2. 8.
 — A Commentary on the First Book of *Moses*, called *Genesis*, 4to. 1695.
 — A Commentary on the Second Book of *Moses*, called *Exodus*, 4to. 1697.
 — A Sermon before the Lords, *Nov.* 5. 1696. on *Dan.* 4. 35.